

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1-10. (Canceled)

11. (Previously Presented) A method of sterilizing poultry meat comprising the step of  
subjecting poultry meat to a contact treatment with an aqueous hinokitiol solution consisting essentially of hinokitiol and water in poultry processing for a production of poultry meat, wherein the contact treatment is carried out in one or more steps selected from the group consisting of an evisceration step, a chilling step and a wrapping step

wherein the hinokitiol aqueous solution-contacted poultry meat is wrapped.

12. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein the contact treatment is further carried out in the interval between the evisceration step and the chilling step or in the interval between the chilling step and the wrapping step.

13. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein the concentration of hinokitiol in the aqueous hinokitiol solution is from 1 to 50000 ppm.

14. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein the aqueous hinokitiol solution has a pH of 4 to 11.

15. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein the contact treatment is carried out at a temperature of 0° to 70°C.

16. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 11, wherein the contact treatment is carried out by at least one selected from the group consisting of applying a coat, spraying, rubbing and immersion.

17. (Previously Presented) A method of sterilizing poultry meat comprising the step of

subjecting poultry meat to a contact treatment with an aqueous hinokitiol solution consisting essentially of hinokitiol and water in poultry processing for a production of poultry meat, wherein the contact treatment is carried out in one or more intervals between consecutive two steps selected from the group consisting of: between an evisceration step and a chilling step and between a chilling step and a wrapping step

wherein the hinokitiol aqueous solution-contacted poultry meat is wrapped.

18. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the contact treatment is further carried out at the chilling step.

19. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the concentration of hinokitiol in the aqueous hinokitiol solution is from 1 to 50000 ppm.

20. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the aqueous hinokitiol solution has a pH of 4 to 11.

21. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the contact treatment is carried out at a temperature of 0° to 70°C.

22. (Previously Presented) The method according to claim 17, wherein the contact treatment is carried out by at least one selected from the group consisting of applying a coat, spraying, rubbing and immersion.

23. (Canceled)

24. (Previously Presented) A method for sterilizing un-sterilized poultry meat comprising:

contacting the un-sterilized poultry meat with an aqueous hinokitiol solution consisting essentially of hinokitiol and water at a temperature of 0° to 70°C;

at a pH of 4 to 11;

at a concentration of 1 to 50000 ppm;

thereby producing sterilizing poultry meat.

25. (Previously Presented) A method for converting live poultry into sterilizing, wrapped, poultry meat comprising the steps of:

I. providing live poultry; and then

II. killing and eviscerating the live poultry thereby producing an un-sterilized carcass comprising skin, dark meat, and white meat; wherein the un-sterilized carcass is contaminated with unwanted microorganisms; and then

III. contacting the un-sterilized carcass and/or the meat with an aqueous hinokitiol solution consisting essentially of hinokitiol and water at a concentration of 1 to 50000 ppm of hinokitiol thereby:

(a) killing the unwanted microorganisms; and

(b) providing a residue of hinokitiol solution on the meat; and then

IV. wrapping the carcass and/or the meat without removal of the residue of hinokitiol solution on the meat;

thereby producing sterilizing, wrapped, poultry meat without adversely affecting either the color or the taste of the meat.

26. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein said aqueous hinokitiol solution further contains a surfactant safe for human consumption.

27. (New) The method according to claim 11, wherein said aqueous hinokitiol solution further contains a plant extract.